



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New York District

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Peter Shugert
Phone: (212) 264-1722
E-mail: peter.h.shugert@usace.army.mil
Fax: (212) 264-0614

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 3, 2002

Army Corps issues dredging permit to U.S. Gypsum Corps finds solution among divergent interests

New York – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District has granted a federal permit to U.S. Gypsum to dredge 125,000 cubic yards of sediment from its Stony Point terminal on the Hudson River and beneficially place the material at the Bayonne Landfill in NJ.

The project has been the subject of substantial controversy during the last two years, culminated by a federal court directive that the Corps make a decision on the permit action this week. At issue was the acceptability of placing the dredged material at the Historic Area Remediation Site (HARS) in the Atlantic Ocean.

Many environmentalists, ocean advocates and elected officials strenuously objected to the placement of the material in the ocean. In response to the controversy, the Corps facilitated negotiations between the states of New York and New Jersey and U.S. Gypsum to find reasonable alternatives. As a result of unprecedented cooperation, U.S. Gypsum agreed to beneficially reuse the dredged material in capping the Bayonne Landfill.

The permit issued by the Corps late yesterday authorizes the dredging subject to the placement at the upland location. Dredging is scheduled to begin almost immediately and is anticipated to be completed when the seasonal window closes in mid-November.

Corps District Engineer Col. John B. O'Dowd said, "Yesterday's action could not have happened without the cooperation of U.S. Gypsum and the states of New York and New Jersey." The Corps was proactively engaged in seeking alternatives to ocean disposal, since the 113 ppb interim standard for PCBs could not be used as a result of the court decision.

"The question remains, now that the Gypsum decision is behind us," said O'Dowd, "will there be a standard in place for PCBs when the next applicant applies for a federal permit? We need," he said, "to develop procedures for assessing the suitability of materials for placement at the HARS consistent with sound environmental operating principles and science."

But equally important, O'Dowd added, is for lawmakers, environmentalists, federal and state agencies, and the maritime community to become energized in finding ways of driving down disposal costs for beneficial reuse or upland placement of dredged material, so that all entities, especially the smaller businesses, can afford to dredge.